

December 18 2020

# Noticias y Notas

News and notes from the Second Judicial District Court

## A word from the chief

Dear SJDC Family,

In normal times, the end of the year is generally a good time to stop, find a quiet place, take a deep breath, and reflect on all of the things that have happened during the passing year. It's also a great time to set goals for the coming year. Well, what a year it has been. It goes without saying that none of us could have ever anticipated anything like what has transpired over the past 10 months.

We were sailing along on fairly smooth waters through January and February only to run into one of the greatest storms most of us have ever experienced. Our lives were literally turned upside down and we were forced to change our entire way of life almost overnight.

However, as difficult and trying as it has been this year, one thing emerged as the beacon of light for all to see—your incredible commitment and dedication to serving your community. The manner in which we delivered services had to change under difficult circumstances. However, the quality of that service not only remained steady, but in many instances was even enhanced and expanded.

One of my favorite heroes, Frederick Douglass, who certainly knew firsthand what it was like to struggle in hard times, once said, "If there is no struggle, there is no progress."

We have had to struggle, but I am confident we will be better for it on the other side. So, let me take this time of reflection to say, "Thank you" for all you have done for the Second Judicial District Court and your community throughout this past year. I want to wish you all a very happy, safe holiday season, and all my best wishes for the coming New Year.

**Judge Stan Whitaker**

## SJDC Giving Tree benefits Roadrunner Foodbank

Social-distancing requirements forced changes to this year's holiday Giving Tree Project. However, your generosity in contributing to this project did not diminish.

On December 11, SJDC volunteer delivery crews dropped off roughly 500 pounds of food to Roadrunner Foodbank, including many frozen turkeys and 160 pounds of food from JJC alone.

That, accompanied by \$1500 in cash donations submitted via the dedicated SDJC webpage, will do a lot for people in need this holiday season. At right, Procurement Specialist David Montoya and Deputy CEO Danny Smith pack up part of the load for delivery. More photos are available Administration Photo Gallery on Second Look.



## Shout outs



**This is the space where we sound the horn for outstanding performances.**

This week's shout out to goes to:

**All of You!** Everyone who works at the Second Judicial District Court deserves a pat on the back for doing their part to keep the court functioning during what has been a most unusual year. Enjoy the holidays, and let's come back next year and do it again.

**We need more news and notes. Share your stories by contacting us at:**  
[albdsxh@nmcourt.gov](mailto:albdsxh@nmcourt.gov)

# You are appreciated: Happy Holidays

This year's virtual Employee Appreciation Event was accompanied by our traditional Gingerbread House Contest. Though we did not get to see them in person, we did get our usual assortment of very creative entries. Did you know that by holding a gingerbread house competition, we are participating in a tradition that some historians says goes back to ancient Greece? Though the making of gingerbread houses for Christmas most likely started in Germany and became popular after the Brothers Grimm published the story of Hansel and Gretel, a brother and sister abandoned in a forest, where they find a house made of gingerbread, cake, and pastries. Despite this find, the story turns quite gruesome. If you don't already know the story, go look it up. But back to our contest.

Traditional gingerbread houses resemble the one from the Grimm fairy tale. Of course, this being New Mexico, the winning entry in our contest was an adobe home, built by Angela Simpson from the Child Support Division. See below.



Whoville, created by the team of Judge Amber Chavez Baker and Kimberly Fenstermacher, Division XXII, and the Tropical House by Janet Van Why of HR, won second and third place, respectively. Want to know more about Gingerbread houses? Check out this [History Channel video](#). More photos of Gingerbread House Contest entries, and the Employee Appreciation Celebration are available on Second Look.